

10 November 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Personnel and  
Professional Recruiters

FROM : Chief, Personnel Recruitment Division

SUBJECT : Recruitment of Negro Personnel

1. The Office of Training sponsored my participation in the Personnel Orientation Seminar ("Equal Job Opportunities--Recruiting, Selecting and Employing Minority Personnel") conducted by the American Management Association in New York City, 28-30 October.

2. This was a hard-nosed, no-nonsense seminar attended by 30 representatives of Industry and Government, including Negroes. There was no discussion of the hyphenated American, with the exception of the Spanish- and Puerto Rican-American. Negroes constitute 95% of the nation's non-white working force of 7,000,000, out of a total work force of 69,000,000, and it was obvious this conference was designed to acquaint employers with the progress industry is making in preparation for 1 July 1965 compliance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Employers of Japanese- or Chinese-Americans would have drawn a resounding "So What?" had they cited such achievement under the heading of minority personnel. This conference had to do with what was termed "black brains" and to a lesser extent, "black brawn."

3. Industry has taken some giant strides in the past two years in its recruitment of Negroes and upgrading of employed negroes to better jobs. It has passed the "Negro in positions of visibility" phase of its integration program and broken down what was termed "the stubborn barriers to placement." In the professional categories the Negro labor market has turned "hard as rock" and with many companies it is not a question of hiring the better qualified applicant if a qualified Negro is available. This is admitted to be discrimination in reverse but industry is quite willing to meet this charge with the argument that its more immediate responsibility is the employment of any qualified Negro while the Negro colleges (some 80 in the nation) are catching up with the

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the calibre of instruction and curriculum calculated to eliminate the qualifications lag inherent in those Negro Institutions which historically have prepared their graduates for "Negro work." For example, it was stated that North Carolina A&T is materially improving its curriculum and, while it is not yet competitive as a 4-year college, Industry is hiring its graduates as technicians or associates, prescribing the additional study the individual will be expected to pursue on his own.

4. As one employer, we have a lot to learn about the Negro college. We may know, for example, that Fisk University is an outstanding university by any standards, complete with a Phi Beta Kappa chapter, and that Tuskegee Institute and Tennessee A&I's Engineering graduates are first-rate. However, we have not yet determined, as has Industry, that there are many other outstanding Negro colleges which have not sought, or attained, accreditation. Xavier University of Louisiana is accredited and Industry now knows no Xavier graduate chooses to stay in Louisiana. On the other hand, the graduates of the six Negro colleges forming the Atlanta University Center complex--Spelman College, Morris Brown College, Morehouse College, Clark College, Interdenominational Theological Center, and Atlanta University--greatly prefer to seek their careers in Atlanta.

5. Industry is aiding the upgrading of Negro colleges through student and faculty scholarships, contributions to the National Negro College Fund, and by sending technicians from their plants and laboratories into the Negro colleges to assist instructors and counsel students, and bringing Negro professors into Summer Programs of productive job assignments designed to sharpen their skills and enable them to better prepare their students for future careers (in the sponsoring Industry, no doubt). The Negro-college professor is paid a salary only slightly above his campus income so as not to entice him away from the teaching profession.

6. General Motors, with 40,000 Negro employees, has for 20 years conducted a 4-week Engineering Educators Conference designed to tip off GM to likely candidates. There are only 7 or 8 Negro Engineering Schools in the country, however, turning out only 200 Engineering graduates annually, more, of course, if extended to Mathematics and Sciences. GM recruits in 260 colleges and universities for 1,200 Engineers annually, including 600 graduates from the 2,400-student body of the General Motors Institute. In 1963, GM recruited 39 Negro Engineers.

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7. ALCOA asks all Placement Directors to turn up Negro graduates. IBM last year sent two Negro graduates of Industrial Schools to Cornell with great success. IBM is now employing Negro professionals at the rate of 45 per year--which they consider significantly short of their desired goal, but a tremendous improvement over the half dozen or so they had been taking in before President Kennedy involved business leaders personally in the nation's problem of Equal Employment Opportunity.

8. IBM is particularly proud of two Negro Ph.D.'s recruited this year, one from UCLA and the other from the University of Washington. It is prouder still of Phoebe Lesane, a Negress graduate of Tougaloo College (Mississippi) and Drexel Institute who now heads one of IBM's major Education Programs. IBM's total Education Program, incidentally, is larger and more expensive than that of Columbia University. As another aside, IBM started its Computer Programmer placement with nothing but MSEE's. When it was discovered that MSEE programmers were spending 7 out of 8 hours playing bridge, they let down the bars, first to BSEE's then to any clear-thinking college graduate regardless of specialization. Six female Negress mathematicians from Fisk were brought in as trainees this year, but IBM indicated these graduates would have been acceptable with any undergraduate degree. IBM has grown from 20,000 employees in 1950 to over 90,000 today, of whom 8,000 are in managerial positions. IBM hires roughly 9,000 new employees annually, 3,000 college-trained of whom 2/3 are acquired through campus recruiting, 1/3 through advertising.

9. IBM's Summer Program embraces 40 Negro professors annually. In addition, it contributes 40 scholarships to the Negro College Fund and 19 Faculty Fellowships for one-year's graduate study (which IBM and other corporations consider more fruitful because of the "multiplying effect" on many students--as against the student scholarship, that is). IBM places its Summer Program professors in productive job assignments as mathematicians with mathematicians, for example, or in Programming Groups. They are treated as working numbers, are not given the public relations red carpet treatment, and are coached so that they can talk to their students in content-oriented terms.

10. As a matter of fact, there was considerable general de-emphasis on the public relations value of the so-called "Red Carpet Treatment" accorded white graduates. One large employer termed it

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strictly a technique which has "given the boys the 'Seven Year's Itch' in three." Our JOT Program apparently has operated with this insight for years, by hiring at reasonable career-start salary levels and not promising spectacular salary advancement and world-shaking responsibilities on the rapid rise to the top.

11. General Motors has a 12-month Co-op program over a 4-year period with Tuskegee. NASA also is co-operating with Tuskegee. GM is not satisfied with its increase in Negro hires, skilled and unskilled, and is seeking to add a minimum of 60 Negroes or other non-whites per month for 15 months. The high for any one month has been 92.

12. ALCOA has a Scholarship Program for Sons and Daughters of Outstanding Personnel and is working overtime to include the greatest possible number of Negro dependents in this program. ALCOA has spearheaded several Detroit-based industries in sponsoring summer-long training of Negro college, high school, and, importantly, junior high school placement and guidance counselors. This training is conducted at the local "streetcar university," Wayne State, and is keyed to acquainting counselors with the job opportunities for Negroes in Detroit industry and the proper preparation for such jobs. With more sponsoring industries in the fold, this program is being extended to another sixteen universities next summer.

13. ALCOA stated it is "standing in line" at the Negro co-op colleges. Hampton Institute is starting a co-op program. U. S. Steel contributes to the United Negro Small College Fund comprising some 35 small colleges in the south, mostly church-affiliated. It has a continuing program for the placement of Negroes in qualitative, non-traditional (managerial and scientific) jobs. It also is sending its technical and scientific people to work with Negro faculties.

14. Most of the Big Ten universities sponsor Negro sister-schools. Michigan and Tuskegee are sister schools, for example. Michigan brings qualified Tuskegee professors to Michigan for an academic year to gain teaching experience.

15. General Motors is concentrating on moving Negroes from the hourly-rate to its Salaried Group (Classification 1 through 8). It is keeping track of "negro scatter" division by division, plant by plant, month by month, through regular plant reporting procedures and internal audit reports. Less than 15% of GM's Negro population was in Service

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Classification jobs. Its inventory of college graduates had not been used to reassign employees to areas of highest potential. This is being corrected. Negroes are moving from production to office work. Negresses are given supplemental training on the outside to prepare them for advancement to stenographic assignments. Certain companies have their own Academic Stenographic Training Program for the non-secretary high school graduate who took an Academic course with the unrealized ambition of going on to college. She is put into the company's ASTP, 1/2 day of production work, 1/2 day of secretarial training.

16. GM had "no difficulty in finding a 'skill bank' in every plant we have." Its summer employment program embraces 16-year old and above Negroes. GM's total work force is 9.2% non-white--as compared to roughly 10% of the nation's total work force being non-white. This does not suggest, however, that industry is committed to hiring a set quota of non-whites. The only conference participant to mention a quota was the Personnel Staffing Specialist of the U. S. Forest Service district office in Washington, D. C., which is under orders from Secretary of Agriculture Freeman to bring its staffing into balance with the Metropolitan Washington "scatter" comprising 25.6% Negroes.

17. Industry is using every Negro recruitment source available: U.S.E.S., the Urban League Skills Bank (Richmond, Virginia, chapter was cited as being especially helpful and productive), CORE, NAACP, in-house Negro employees, ministers, and other community bi-racial and minority group associations.

18. Industry has suffered from having no recruitment image in the Negro community. Rather than having a good or a poor image, many concerns simply had no image--because they had done little or no Negro recruiting. Two years ago, duPont had no image, for example, at Howard University, accredited and a recruitment source for many major concerns. Accordingly, duPont mounted an all-out program to get itself "accredited" at Howard.

19. IBM spends \$25,000 annually in advertising with EBONY magazine. Its spokesman said he could not prove that this advertising had resulted in any direct recruitment dividends but he was satisfied that over a period of time it would help to establish IBM in the mind of the Negro (at least the readers of EBONY) as an employer of Negroes.

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20. At the predominantly Negro colleges the scene is one of industry recruiters "flooding the campus," encountering faculties that are unprepared to make specific student recommendations, working in poor placement facilities (because there had been no demand for them in the past), and generally creating a chaotic condition. Out of it, however, the Negro collegian is awakening to the realization he is wanted.

21. The problem of setting a recruitment image, however, is first of all, building an image. The college and the student must be convinced that you "really mean it." Negro leaders have emphasized with industry that they "be specific" in discussing employment opportunities with Negro candidates, "spell it out," "don't build up the candidate's hopes too high," "avoid disappointment," "extend the interview," "use everyday language," "level," "admit you are seeking black brains!," "don't pussyfoot," "if you are pioneering in a new placement area, untouched by Negroes, start with the best-qualified Negro you can find." That industry is assiduously seeking many new Negro personnel is no assurance you can "use the Urban League to get yourself an instant Negro!" What is needed most is "carefully paving the way for the interview--changing disbelief to belief."

22. Our conference did not translate "changing disbelief to belief" to mean that it takes a Negro to recruit a Negro, but it was made clear that if you've never recruited at a particular predominantly Negro institution before, disbelief can best be scotched in the first visit by the recruiter being accompanied by a satisfied Negro employee of his company.

23. It has been a new experience for most of these companies, however, learning they had no recruitment image among the Negro colleges or among the Negro graduates of integrated universities with a high Negro population. Cornell University was one of these cited.

24. All the companies present freely recognized that "the Negro does significantly poorer on every test we use--especially in the verbal and arithmetic reasoning areas." But then industry is not resting its case on these grounds. Industry is not teaching Negroes how to pass a test (which was compared to "treating a symptom"), but, rather, is hiring a qualified Negro when a better qualified white applicant is available. By the same token, in many semi-skilled job areas, they are not requiring a high school diploma where it traditionally has been

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required of white applicants. Industry is tending to think of these departures from traditional employment procedures as a form of immediate assistance to a culturally disadvantaged group--discrimination for which they willingly will take the rap. They are thinking now of more salutary long-range, dividends attaching themselves to the corporate image, and to building up a work force which in some geographical areas has worn somewhat thin.

25. This attitude has some admirable qualities, of course. Essentially, however, it merely recognizes that members of other minority groups have fought their way "from the slums to the top" in considerable numbers, from a culturally disadvantaged base, because the opportunity always prevailed. The Negro who has done so, however, has surmounted not only the same cultural barriers but an additional more critical barrier, the fact that he was black.

26. Color alone, it was pointed out, by a visiting social psychologist, accounts today for most of the apathy or lack of motivation among young Negroes to remain in school, let alone progress. They think of themselves as black and of being black as their passport to being overlooked in the nation's quest for worthwhile talent. They flunk tests with great regularity because nothing ever has come their way, or, rather, their parents' way, because they passed a test. They are today letting themselves in for seismographic shock. Industry is taking them today if they make a reasonably good pass at the test.

27. Industry is going to the school, the church, and even the home, in Operation Bootstrap fashion, showing company movies that discourage would-be dropouts and stress the "open door" theme. Industry means to shape up a whole new generation of Negro employables. I was amazed by some of the community projects in this regard. None of the companies is satisfied with the number of Negro employees on its payroll today. All say they must do a "much better" recruiting and training job. The way they kept addressing themselves to this goal convinced me the Negro not only never had it so good but doesn't really know how good he now has it.

28. This takes a little time to sink in, but there is a tremendous head of steam behind this drive and the dividends for employer and Negro employee are visualized as being just around the corner. There are economic stakes in this game, of course, if we know Business.

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Take Newark, N.J., a city which has experienced a loss to the white suburbs of 1,000,000 white residents with an equal offset gain of Negroes and Puerto Ricans, whose share of Newark's population has shot up 50% in the past four years. Newark has a local and untypical problem but it has forced Newark business and industrial concerns, in order to survive, to employ Negroes, in jobs they never held before, as bank tellers and in other service-oriented positions. Western Electric, with a \$300,000,000 investment in industrial plant, would have closed its doors there if it had not discovered overnight that Negroes and Puerto Ricans could perform many plant duties they had never performed before, for Western Electric.

29. It is not this more graphic aspect of survival that is energizing industry to employ the Negro, however. It is related to more basic economics having to do with the Negro as a lower-income consumer and the family of the unemployed Negro as a ward of society. The history of America's industrial revolution, as we all know it, is not exactly replete with the reputation of do-goodism. Today, the labor side of the picture is considerably improved but the Negro male's median wage is \$3,075, that of the white male, \$5,137, the Negro female, \$1,276, white female, \$2,530. This deficit spending power of the Negro coupled with the \$300,000,000 doled out annually for dependent children of unemployed Negroes represents \$1,550,000,000 down the drain insofar as industry views the consumer goods market.

30. This consideration, plus the projection of 35,000,000 new jobs coming on the market in the next ten years, strongly suggests a manning problem. These new jobs will be needed to accommodate population expansion (1,500,000), retraining (800,000), and to offset jobs lost to automation (1,200,000). These 35,000,000 new jobs are needed to keep the nation's GNP on a high level of economic prosperity.

31. Throughout industry, there is considerable movement in the direction of up-grading Negro employees to jobs more closely paralleling their true potential. The day of token placement of Negroes in "positions of visibility" is passe, as is the guise of paying lip tribute to equal employment opportunity. Most major industries have gone through the phase of leading from strength--breaking the ice with a highly qualified Negro professional or an especially attractive Negress secretary in the boss's office, "technique," adopted as stated, on the advice of the Negro leaders themselves and one that still holds for the company about to buck the "stubborn barriers to placement." Painting out the "White Only" signs with transparent paint is losing its touch of humor, as is the old-line employee asking the foreman where he would like to place the spear-rack.

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32. The transition has not been easy, not only in the south where most major industries have plants or branches but in the north as well. That racism is not restricted to the south came out loud and clear. In fact, Industry's attention is concentrated more heavily today on avoiding the dangers of race riots leading to plant shutdown in the north.

33. The Negro population of New York City is greater today than that of the ten most populous southern cities. This will be true of Chicago as well by 1970, Cleveland, by 1973, and seven or eight additional northern cities by 1980.

34. To say the transition has not been easy speaks of many facets of the problem. NASA, for example, has implemented its program on the basis of "calling for the resignation" of any employee whose aesthetic tastes are bruised by the prospect of working alongside a Negro. NASA volunteered that no resignations have been turned in. Conversely, ALCOA cited the entire secretarial unit of one of its southern plants as welcoming a Negro professional to the supervisory hierarchy of one of its engineering units, "because you knew we were the most sophisticated unit in the entire ALCOA, Tennessee plant."

35. Some 300 companies have taken the President's "Plans for Progress" pledge, either voluntarily or of necessity, preferring to continue contracting with the United States Government. Our seminar was addressed by Mr. N. Thompson Powers, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Labor. Mr. Powers spoke to Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act, to Executive Orders 10925 and 1114, the NLR Act, the early establishment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and to the whole fabric of Affirmative Action Obligations; Failure to Hire--covering inaction, such as failure to consider an applicant; Intentional violation, as opposed to violation; not recruiting so as to insure a representative group from which to select employees, et cetera.

36. As Mr. Powers spoke and responded to questions, it was clear industry has been legislated into a posture of morality. Be that as it may, and at the very great risk of beating a hint to death, we should know what is motivating our competition.

37. "Plans for Progress" have to do with the highly emotional subject of how a company offers equal employment opportunity to

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minority personnel. The company's president and your President, Lyndon B. Johnson, co-sign the plan. Having signed the plan, the company president stays in the background while line supervision hammers out the day to day details and absorbs all the face to face, person to person reverberations. Compliance with the spirit of the new law is not a new goal for a large sector of American industry. The President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity has been operative since August 1963 when President Johnson established the Plans for Progress Advisory Council and "mobilized the voluntary efforts of American business and private institutions and thus provided an effective means to achieve equal employment opportunity." Company after company has fallen into step with its "Plans for Progress" in this area. What a company must ask itself by way of self-analysis is whether it is truly an Equal Employment Opportunity employer. As to its policy regarding employment of minorities, the company is asked:

"Please state your policies as to employability and employment by you (whether directly, through subsidiary, affiliate, etc.) of persons of differing race, creed, color and national origin.

- (a) Do they apply to all persons employable or employed? In each type of business? In each locality where they operate?
- (b) How and to what extent have you communicated these policies to those in your organization who put them into practice?
- (c) How and to what extent do you check fulfillment of these policies?
- (d) In so doing, have you found situations that have needed improvement? If so, how have you been able to effect improvement?
- (e) How do the policies and practices of unions and other organizations of workers with which you have a collective bargaining or other understanding affect the operation of your policy?"

38. The "Plan for Progress" company, having examined its policies, is then asked to examine its practices as to employment

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of minorities. Under Recruiting and Vocational Training, the company is asked:

- "(a) Describe your practices for recruiting new personnel.
- "(b) Do they tend to provide a flow of qualified applicants they adequately reflect the make up of the available labor market?
- "(c) Where appropriate, can you suggest additional recruitment methods or practices which will insure a flow of qualified applicants representative of the labor market in which you operate?
- "(d) Within the scope of your experience and knowledge, do local vocational training programs provide qualified graduates?
- "(e) Are minority groups actively participating in these programs?
- "(f) If necessary, are there any suggestions you could make that would improve these programs?"

39. Under Qualifications of Applicants-Training;

- "(a) What, if any, are the principal racial or ethnic minority groups in your area against whom discrimination might be applied?
- "(b) Have you ever attempted a sampling or analysis of the qualifications of these minority group applicants as compared to qualifications of other applicants?
- "(c) If so, has such sampling or analysis indicated that minority group applicants were less qualified, as equally qualified or more qualified than other applicants?
- "(d) If the sampling or the analysis indicated that minority group applicants were less qualified than other applicants, what were the underlying causes, e.g., insufficient education? Lack of experience?

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"(e) Do you provide training to enable new employees to become better qualified? If so, is such training equally available to all new employees?"

40. Under Hiring - Placement:

"(a) Does examination of your hiring practices indicated to you that all applicants are considered solely by their qualifications for the job opening applied for?

"(b) Do you have any job categories which in practical effect are closed to persons in minority groups? If so, list jobs and state reasons.

"(c) Is the initial job into which a new employee is placed determined (or influenced materially) by whether he is of a minority group? If so, what has brought this about?

"(d) Where appropriate, what steps can or should be taken to put job placement practices on a nondiscriminatory basis?

41. As to Compensation:

"(a) Throughout your operations do you give comparable pay for comparable work to all employees?

"(b) If there are variances, explain circumstances and suggest how equality can be achieved."

42. As to "On-the-Job" and Apprenticeship Training:

"(a) Describe your practices in selecting employees for post-employment training programs.

"(b) Are all qualified applicants given equal opportunity for training?

"(c) Are those now participating in your training programs representative of the racial composition of your work force?

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"(d) If not, can you suggest workable changes in your program so as to provide equal opportunity?"

43. As to Transfers:

- "(a) Are transfers of your employees from one job or unit to another made without regard to race, creed, color or national origin?
- "(b) If not, suggest methods of improvement.
- "(c) What effects, if any, do collective bargaining agreements have on transfer procedure?"

44. Promotions and Upgrading:

- "(a) Are there differences in your practices for promotion and upgrading because of race, creed, color or national origin?
- "(b) Where appropriate, can you suggest significant improvements which would give to each qualified employee equal opportunity?"

45. Layoffs and Other Terminations - Rehiring:

- "(a) Are there differences in your practices regarding layoffs and other terminations of employment because of race, creed, color or national origin?
- "(b) Are there differences in rehiring employees because of race, creed, color or national origin?
- "(c) Where appropriate, suggest workable changes in your layoff and rehiring practices which would result in an equal opportunity for all employees."

46. Segregated Work Areas and Departments:

- "(a) Are any of your work areas or departments racially segregated? If so, explain the reasons.

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"(b) What workable changes can be made to eliminate them? When and how?"

47. Segregated Facilities:

"(a) Are your following facilities racially segregated?

Cafeterias

Recreational Facilities

Restrooms

and Programs

Drinking Fountains

Employee Services

Other

"(b) If so, please describe the reasons.

"(c) How and when can these conditions be eliminated?"

48. The whole scope of the new Civil Rights law would suggest that the employment climate in both the private and non-profit sectors of our society is now that of "playing for keeps." We are in the no-nonsense era of equal employment opportunity.

49. The Agency's policy with respect to the recruitment and placement of the Negro has been an "open door" policy with overtones of non-aggression. We haven't exactly been pushing Negro candidates through the door. The Negro professionals who have made it with us would have made it with our competitors. This, certainly, is as it should be. Our recruitment visits to the predominantly Negro college, however, and our interviews with any Negro professional, should inspire us to keep a sharper eye trained for career talent.



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